

REMARKS

Claims 1-14, 28, 31 and 37-40 are currently pending in the application. Claims 28, 31, 37 and 38 have been presented in independent form and claims 15-18, 20-27, 29, 30, 32-36 and 41-54 have been canceled. Accordingly, Applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections in view of Applicants' Remarks.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants acknowledge the indication in the Notice of Panel Decision from Pre-Appeal Brief Review mailed on January 18, 2006 that claims 1-14 are allowed and that claims 28, 31 and 37-40 contain allowable subject matter and would be allowable if presented in independent forms that include all the features of their base claims and any intervening claims. Accordingly, as Applicants have herein presented claims 28, 31, 37 and 38 in independent form and canceled the rejected and withdrawn claims, Applicants submit that all pending claims are in condition for allowance.

The Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b), are moot**Over Brendel**

Applicants traverse the rejection of claims 15-18, 20-22, 26, 29, 30, 32-36, 42 and 45-51 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,141,238 to BRENDEL for the reasons already made of record.

However, Applicants submit that this rejection is moot inasmuch as the above-noted claims have been canceled.

Applicants request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of the above-noted claims under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b).

Over Wicks

Applicants traverse the rejection of claims 23, 24 and 26 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,783,085 to WICKS et al. for the reasons already made of record.

However, Applicants submit that this rejection is moot inasmuch as the above-noted claims have been canceled.

Applicants request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of the above-noted claims under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b).

CONCLUSION

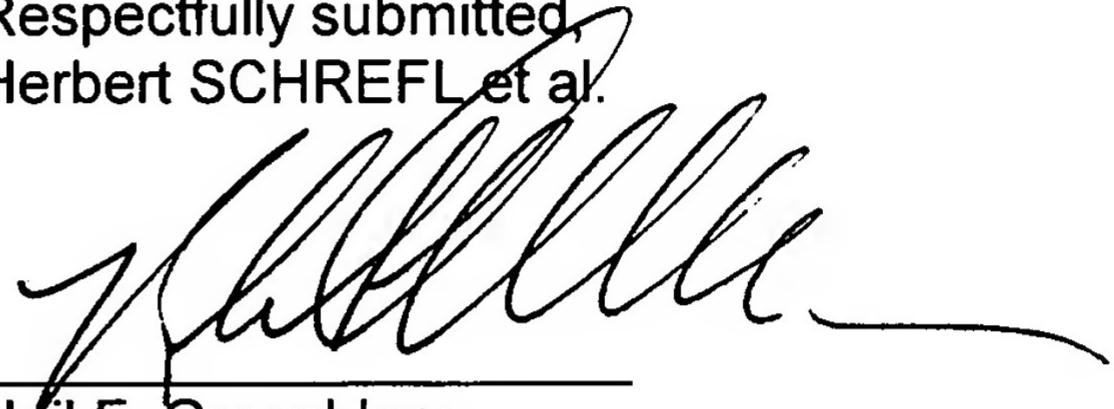
In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that none of the references of record, either taken alone or in any proper combination thereof, anticipate or render obvious Applicants' invention, as recited in each of the pending claims. The applied references of record have been discussed and distinguished, while significant claimed features of the present invention have been pointed out.

Further, any amendments to the claims which have been made in this response and which have not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection based upon the prior art, should be considered to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to attach thereto.

Accordingly, reconsideration of the outstanding Office Action and allowance of the present application and all the claims therein are respectfully requested and now believed to be appropriate.

Authorization is hereby given to charge any fees necessary for consideration of this amendment to deposit account No. 19-0089.

Respectfully submitted,
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February 21, 2006
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